

"O God, Thou Art!" It is a greater thing to cry, Thou art with me. Such a man can always say, "I fear no evil. Such a man will never turn his face to the wall in despair. He will not go into retirement on Thanksgiving Day to nurse his sorrows. Stripped and peeled, it may be, by the blows of adversity, blistered and scarred by the flames of affliction, yet will he step forth softly, reverently, humbly, to 'give thanks unto the Lord.'"

### For a Continuous Ministry.

BY PASTOR J. WEBB

Our friend Layman asks: "Would it not be better for our denomination to have a recognized head for the general government of both ministry and churches?"

Seeing that the writer is seeking for information in regard to the matter I will venture a few remarks.

Baptists, at Conventions and Associations, talk sometimes about uniting with other denominations. They say that it would be so nice to have one large, glorious body. These little talks generally result in arousing the good old Baptist spirit.

I do not see any harm in our brother Layman indulging in a little talk about Baptists having a recognized head to govern them. I am of the opinion that it would be a good thing for the denomination if other laymen would seek, through the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, information on great and important questions. A lion may be found sleeping, but that is no sign that he has lost his spirit. The Baptist spirit is still alive in the denomination. If anyone has any doubts, "Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more."

Baptist churches are independent societies; they are not ruled or governed by any outside convention, court, or ecclesiastical body. Baptist churches have a head—that head is Christ. If the churches and ministers are loyal to the great Head of the church they will need no other.

Has any one, since the days of the apostles, ever heard of such a thing as the Baptist, or New Testament, church being governed by any recognized human head? "Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? . . . Canst thou put an hook in his nose? . . . Will he make a covenant with thee? Will thou take him for a servant forever? Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?" Has there ever been a man—a leader of men, who could say of Baptists: "I say unto this man, go, and he goeth; and unto another, come, and he cometh?" There are no governmental chains strong enough to bind this great leviathan. There are no fires fierce enough to burn the Baptist faith. There are no instruments of torture severe enough to subdue this God-given Baptist spirit. Baptists are God's free men—they are the aristocracy of heaven—the blue blood of royalty flows through their veins.

Our friend Layman goes on to make the following statement:

"So far as our ministry is concerned it has become very apparent that a governing head is now sadly required to regulate the ministerial charge of our churches."

Is this statement a fact? I think not. Layman is all right in being anxious for the welfare of Zion, but I think that he is all wrong when he says that a governing head is sadly required, etc. Look back, brother Layman, about seventy years. There was a little yellow farm-house—that little farm-house was all the college that our Baptist denomination could boast of. Now, behold with wonder, the magnificent buildings at Wolfville—and mark you, all this; with no governing head but Christ. Look again. Count the number of Baptist churches: you can count them on your fingers. Now, lift up your eyes—"walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof; mark ye well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces, and then ask: do we sadly need a governing head?"

Christ is the head of the Baptist church—so let it be. Israel said to Samuel: "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel . . . and Samuel prayed to the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." We Baptists are not like other nations (denominations), and we have no desire for a governing head to make us like them. Christ is our head and we need no other. When all other denominations and sects have passed away and are forgotten, the Baptist, or New Testament, church will be marching onward and upward to glory.

Yes, we need a continuous ministry, but let us look to Christ for it.

### Collections for Ministers, Infirm and Aged.

MINISTERS, WIDOWS AND ORPHANS HELPED THROUGH ANNUITY FUND.

By collections and otherwise the denomination provides for the disabled pastors and their families. How do they receive their annuities thus supplied? Here is what one widow says when she received the small sum of \$20: "Surely God is caring for us. He that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. I will lift up mine

eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help." The above moves the heart.

Some of the churches have responded to the circular; others are preparing to do so. Amherst writes that the day is fixed for a collection. Amherst always sends a good contribution. Rev. B. D. Simpson says Berwick is arranging for a good offering to this fund. Let the offerings be prompt and large. Of late two or three brethren, men who have wrought faithfully and successfully, are obliged to cease work and draw from the fund. Please make your offerings larger this year. A friend a few years ago gave \$100 to go to the benefit of his pastor. That pastor is now disabled, and has no accumulations of money. He draws \$66 a year from that \$100. It is now about Christmas. Will individuals and churches please ask their pastors if they are on the fund? Christmas gifts of money put into the annuity fund will be returned as long as your pastors live. Their widows, too, will reap benefits.

Pastors, not on the fund, will please consider the subject. One minister, past middle life, heard the report at the convention, returned home, and although having no finances laid aside, raised \$200 and secured himself, wife and children against the day of adversity.

E. M. SAUNDERS, Sec'y-Treas.

### Notes by the Way.

Before coming to a discussion of affairs at Halifax, a few words might be said regarding the weather, for certainly even that well worn theme will bear discussion. Even the "oldest inhabitant" is a loss this fall, and those prophets of evil who love to shake the head and spoil the brightness of a pleasant day by their lugubrious talk of weather-breeders are almost for the once reduced to silence. I was asked one day if I imagined that the weather in New Brunswick was as pleasant as we were enjoying. That question, perhaps, it is needless to say, was asked by a native of Halifax, and when I solemnly assured him that the variety of weather enjoyed by New Brunswickers was slightly superior to the Nova Scotia kind, he looked politely incredulous but asked no further questions. Within the past few days the summer-like weather has given place to a pleasant touch of winter, and Thanksgiving Day brought an inch or two of snow, and the slippery hillsides are dotted with children young and old and sleds of all descriptions.

A few words were promised about Halifax as seen by an outsider, but even here there is nothing new to be said for all outsiders see about the same sights and write the same things concerning them. One interesting sight to a stranger, and one that is not so often described, is the Halifax country market. Every Saturday morning the teams from the country are driven into town and are ranged along the streets surrounding the Post Office building. The various commodities for sale including butter, eggs, meats, vegetables, etc., etc., are scattered indiscriminately along the sidewalk, and the owners stand or sit beside their wares, seemingly indifferent to cold or storm, while the townspeople carefully pick their way among boxes and baskets as though getting the morning mail under these slight difficulties was the most natural thing in the world.

In regard to the Baptist churches of Halifax little or nothing need be said, as Reporter has already in the last issue admirably summed up the situation. Perhaps the good work that is going on at the West End deserves a little fuller notice. Already twenty have been baptized and others are awaiting baptism. The work has been deep but quiet, very few special services being held and no trace of undue excitement being apparent. Very soon the question of enlarged accommodations must be faced, for even now the little church will not seat the Sunday evening congregations, and some have even been turned from the door for lack of space. As the church is but weak financially outside aid must be asked or else a crushing burden of debt be incurred. But in no place does the prospect of future growth seem so certain, and any help the denomination gives at present will be repaid with interest in future years.

With Thanksgiving Day came an uncontrollable desire to revisit Wolfville and the scenes of the pleasant college days. This year also the Intercollegiate Y. M. C. A. Conference meets here at Acadia, and my own wishes and the cordial invitation of many old friends have induced me rather against my own judgment to prolong my stay over Sunday, doing what little work there is to be done here for our paper. A report of the Conference will doubtless reach the MESSENGER AND VISITOR from another source. It seems best also that I should not begin to enlarge upon the affairs of Acadia as it would then be hard to find a stopping place and this letter is already approaching its limit as to length. The following week will see the end of the work at Halifax, and after that the places along the line from Halifax to Moncton will be visited. Subscribers in arrears in these places are especially requested to note the fact that I will call upon them sometime before Christmas.

R. J. COLPITTS.

Wolfville, Nov. 30.

### The Old and the New in Christian Life.

Ecc. 7: 10; Eph. 2: 11-13; Rev. 21: 1-7.

The Christian is ever to be making growth spiritually. He is to advance from the earlier or infantile experiences to larger, fuller and more advanced forms of life. In this way he attains to a higher life day by day and year by year if he is a growing Christian, as every one should be.

Entrance upon Christian life has been described by Christ himself as a birth. It is the beginning of a life which is different from that in which he has heretofore existed. The natural man differs from the brute creation in the possession of divinely imparted qualities, for we read that God breathed into him the breath of life and man became a living soul. But renewed or converted man has come into still higher attainments. He has opened his soul to the divine influence of God's Holy Spirit, and God has imparted to him a spiritual life he did not possess in his natural or unconverted condition. He has become a child of God. He has been born into the family and kingdom of God. Old things have passed away. All things have become new.

But as an infant grows, preserving his personal identity and yet becoming more and more, so the child of God grows, making constantly new attainments, growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The early life succeeds to a life of clearer perceptions, stronger faith, holier communion with God, and with more power for service and usefulness.

As the beginning of Christian life came from God, so every advance is from the same source. Those who are born of the Spirit must and will live in the Spirit. Day by day they are to feed upon God's Word, given by divine inspiration, and are to come to the throne of grace in direct and personal communion with God.

People sometimes make mistakes when they talk of growth and progress. Some people think it an evidence of advance when they discard the simple faith of the gospel. To do this is not advance, but retrogression. It is a movement not upward but downward. It is not growth, but decay. It does not mean life, but death. It is not spiritual intelligence, but a silly conceit. As we grow, it will be in love for God, in reverence for his Word, in faith, in prayer in humility, in tenderness of heart. May this year be one in which we shall leave behind us all that grieves God and attain to larger holiness and knowledge of divine truth.—Herald and Presbyter.

### The Gain of Loss.

"Perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him forever."

There are possessions which only become our own when for the time we have lost them. There are joys which never abide with us till they have passed through the cloud. We, like Philemon, are enriched by our bereavements. We often hold a faith just because we have been born to it; and its value is unknown. But a child comes and receives it out of our sight; and suddenly it becomes precious. We awake to the knowledge that there has been a diamond in our hand. We find that we have been rich without knowing it. We would give all the world to get back what yesterday we deemed of no price.

And in that desire we are richer, better than we were before. It is better to know the preciousness of faith, even while not having it, than to have it and not know its preciousness. It is better to cry for a Christ whom you believe to be absent than to stand in his presence and count it a worthless thing. And the very cry will bring him back; for what is thy need of him but himself within thee? The eye will bring him back—no longer to be ignored, but to be cherished; no longer to be an appendage to life; but to be life itself; no longer to be a Sunday guest, but to abide with you forever. My Father, help me to realize the gain of my losses. I speak of the silver lining in the cloud; teach me that the cloud itself is the silver lining of my life. My life is colorless until thy cloud comes. It is in the moment of departure that I recognize my angel; the wings are revealed in the act of disappearing. Men say thou art manifested by what thou givest: I think thou art more manifested by what thou withdrawest. The veil is never so rent from my heart as in the hour when thou claimest back thine own. Thy gift becomes glorious when thou coverest it with thy hand; it is expedient for me that my Christ should go away.

Thy gifts are too near me to be seen by me. Therefore, thou hast sent a cloud over the mountain of radiance. Thou hast trained my love by loss; thou hast educated my faith by shadow; thou hast taught me morning by night. Thou hast made me to stretch out my hands to clasp that which was unfelt before. Thou hast hid thyself behind the curtain, that I may learn to cry for thee. I basked at first in thee, like an unconscious flower; thy winter broke the flower, and made me a man. I woke to thee by the blast of my own wailing—the wailing for an absent joy. I could not take thy blessing till I had departed for a while.—George Matheson.